

Copa Cogeca representatives are disappointed European Union (EU) farm ministers have not pressed harder for a more comprehensive aid package related to Russia's import ban.



This follows an informal meeting on Tuesday of ministers in Luxembourg as a follow-up to last week's announcement of a [€500 million \(US\\$563 million\) compensation package](#).

The European farmer and cooperative organization says the current measures on the table are not proportional to damages caused to agricultural sectors since Russia imposed its import ban.

In a meeting with the Luxembourg Presidency, Copa president Albert Jan Maat said although there were positive elements in the package such as a boost in the EU promotion programs, it "falls short of expectations."

"EU producers have lost their main export market to Russia worth €5.5 billion (US\$6.2 billion) annually and a €500 million aid package will not be enough to compensate for this," he said.

"They are also being squeezed hard by retailers. Producer prices do not even cover input costs and we are experiencing extreme volatility on agricultural markets.

"The package includes very few measures to help manage the market or deal with the increasing volatility and short term problems."

He went on to say the vast majority of the total aid package would be allocated to member

states in the form of national envelopes.

"We nevertheless welcome the fact that farmers direct payments will be advanced to help improve their short term cash flow problems. This has to be paid out without waiting for all controls to be done. This is crucial."

During the meeting, Cogeca president Christian Pees went on to underline the importance of agri-cooperatives in helping farmers to better market their produce with higher returns and warned of unfair and abusive practices in the food chain, claiming the EU Commission failed to deliver on curbing these practices.

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